Excise Duty Evasion

4377. SHRI JANG BAHADUR SINGH PATEL : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether there are large number of industrial units manufacturing carts of branded goods without obtaining permission from the Commissioner of Central Excise thereby evading payment of central excise duty substantially;

(b) if so, the number of such manufacturing units that have been detected and how much central excise duty they have evaded over the period;

(c) the action has been taken against those manufacturing units;

(d) whether there is any proposal to extensively unearth such units to check Government taxes evasion and to book then; and

(e) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M.P. VEERENDRA KUMAR): (a) to (e) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

[Translation]

Smuggling of Narcotics

4378. SHRI LAKSHMAN SINGH : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) the steps Government propose to take to check the smuggling of narcotics in the country;

(b) whether the Government propose to enhance the period of punishment for smuggling of narcotics; and

(c) if so the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M.P. VEERENDRA KUMAR) : (a) Government has already taken following necessary steps to check the smuggling of narcotics in the country :-

(i) Instructions have been issued to all the enforcement agencies to maintain the utmost vigil and step up enforcement efforts under the stringent provisions contained in NDPS Act.

(ii) The dedicated narcotic cells are operational in Police and the Customs and Central Excise formations in the border States.

(iii) 2/3rd of Indo-Pak border has been fenced and provided with flood lighting.

(iv) BSF and Coast Guards, who are deployed on land and coastal borders, have been vested with powers under the Customs Act to interdict narcotic drugs on the border in addition to the several Central and State Government enforcement agencies empowered under the NDPS Act.

(v) Training is being imparted to officers to improve their effectiveness. Vehicles and communication equipment have been provided.

(vi) Reward scheme for informers and enforcement officers is being implemented zealously.

(vii) Quarterly coordination meetings chaired by DG, NCB are held regularly in New Delhi which are attended by all Enforcement agencies involved in fighting against drug trafficking, at the highest level.

(viii) A bilateral agreement has been arrived at with authorities in Pakistan whereby periodic meetings take place at Secretary level and DG level. Representatives of Indian & Pakistani anti-narcotics agencies have been included in the border meetings of BSF and Pak Rangers. Contact points have been designated by the two countries for direct operational communication.

(ix) A comprehensive bilateral agreement has been entered into by the Govt. of India and the Government of Union of Myanmar for reducing demand and preventing illicit trafficking in narcotic drugs.

(x) The Govt. of India has provided two drug sniffer dogs and also trained dog-handlers to Myanmar for detection of drugs.

(b) and (c) Yes, Sir. It is proposed to amend the N.D.P.S. Act, inter-alia, to rationalise the sentece structure so as to make the Act more effective by providing stringent punishment even for offences relating to cannabis including cultivation of cannabis. The enhanced punishment for previous convicts for selected offences is proposed to be extended to all the offences under the Act.

Trade with core labour standard

4379. SHRI SATYAJITSINH DULIPSINH GAEKWAD
SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA :

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the decision was taken in the Ministerial Conference of World Trade Organisations held in December 1996 in Singapore regarding linkage of free